

A History of the Lakehead Amateur Radio Club
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Part 3.

To continue the story of the Club's "shack in the bush". The Club station set up in this building was a success, as such, but there was a problem. When a Club or an individual acquires property it becomes subject to certain liabilities. As these could result in financial difficulties which the Club or a member thereof could not afford, we decided to forgo the luxury of a private Clubhouse. The shack was sold to Hec Wilson - VE3DMZ who was then living in a small building made from an aeroplane crate. He would then have a two-room bungalow.

At a meeting in December 1946, (*Charter Member*) Les Harris - VE3A YZ (*formerly VE3GB*) brought up the subject of the Club organizing an Emergency Group to give assistance in cases where communications were required. This could be cases of flood, bush fires or lost persons, etc. At this time Civil Defence was being organized and the Club offered its services. In 1953 the Club took part in the first Civil Defence exercise in the Lakehead (Operation Trillium). Club members have assisted as operators in other similar operations with the Emergency Measures Organization.

In a like manner, the Club has been working closely with the Lakehead Search and Rescue Unit Inc. A portable transmitter and receiver with associated equipment is kept in readiness at all times in the Club station in the EMO Building. This is taken out by the Search and Rescue Unit whenever required. One or two operators accompany the unit. Members using their home equipment act as base stations for traffic which might arise at the site or search (*area*).

In March 1951 the Club again voted on whether or not to change the name of the Club. We elected to change to the Lakehead Amateur Radio Club. There was also a vote taken following amalgamation of Fort William and Port Arthur but the attempt to introduce Thunder Bay into the name was defeated.

In order to keep the members in touch with ham activities locally and otherwise, the Club has always endeavoured to issue monthly bulletins. Originally this was a single sheet to advise when and where the next meeting would be held. First issues in 1948 were written under the heading "QRM". Later this was changed to "High-Q" and continues under this name. From the single sheet it has grown to six or eight pages containing an editorial, reports on monthly meetings, notices of stations' frequencies, network information and technical articles, etc.

This installment of our history began with the episode of the Club's station in the shack. Now comes the story of the sad end of said shack. As aforementioned, this had become part of VE3DMZ's dwelling. Although somewhat handicapped and using a cane for walking, he lived by himself in his comfortable little shack on Central Avenue. One night in January 1961 he was rudely awakened and found his house in flames. He struggled over to the door, opened it and was promptly blown outside by the draft. He got over to his car, sat down, and watched his worldly possessions, including his ham gear, bum up. Hec. went to hospital for a few days, there

were some bums and a bad heart to look after. While he was there his fellow hams were organizing to demonstrate the esprit de corps which exists in amateur circles. The L.A.R.C. started a fund by donating \$50.00 towards replacing Hec.'s radio gear. The word got around and donations were received from Ontario hams elsewhere. The fund grew to \$828.00 and VE3DMZ was soon back on the air again. He was an enthusiastic ham and one of the first to go "Mobile", but his heart was not strong and he became a "Silent Key" March 11, 1964 at age 49.

LARC